

***Amendments to the Specification:***

On page 1 of the specification under the heading 'Cross-Reference to Related Applications', please substitute the following text for any previously-entered statements:

“This application claims priority under 35 USC 120 as a continuation application to U.S. Application No. 09/729,538, filed December 4, 2000 (now U.S. Patent 6,682,144), which is a national phase application of PCT/EP/99/03825, filed June 2, 1999, which claims priority of German patent application DE 19825225 filed June 5, 1998.”

Please delete the three paragraphs beginning on page 1, line 18 (starting below the “Summary of the Invention” heading) through page 2, line 8 and insert the following paragraphs therefor:

“In one aspect the invention is a lumbar support mechanism comprising a lumbar support element being flexible through a range of flexion, the lumbar support element having an upper portion and a lower portion, an adjustment device operatively engaged with the upper portion and the lower portion of the lumbar support element such that adjustment of the adjustment device varies the flexion, and two oppositely-oriented flap portions attached to the lumbar support element by two connecting webs, the connecting webs forming a substantially horizontal pivoting axis.

“In another aspect the invention is a lumbar support mechanism comprising a lumbar support element being flexible through a range of flexion, the lumbar support element having an upper portion and a lower portion, an adjustment device operatively engaged with the upper

portion and the lower portion of the lumbar support element such that adjustment of the adjustment device varies the flexion, and a plurality of flap portions, at least two of the flap portions being disposed in opposite directions wherein the flap portions are completely surrounded by slots in the lumbar support element.

“In yet another aspect the invention is a lumbar support mechanism comprising a lumbar support element being flexible through a range of flexion, the lumbar support element having an upper portion and a lower portion, an adjustment device operatively engaged with the upper portion and the lower portion of the lumbar support element such that adjustment of the adjustment device varies the flexion, and a plurality of flap portions attached to the lumbar support element by a plurality of connecting webs, the connecting webs forming a substantially horizontal pivoting axis, at least two of the flap portions being disposed in opposite directions from one another.

“In still another aspect the invention is a lumbar support element comprising a flexible lumbar support element having an upper portion and a lower portion, and a plurality of flaps attached to the flexible lumbar support element by a plurality of connecting webs, the connecting webs forming a substantially horizontal pivoting axis, at least two of the flaps being disposed in opposite directions, the flaps being completely surrounded by slots in the lumbar support element.”